



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1941.

SHELLFISH ARE "HOMEBODIES" OF THE FISH WORLD

"Shellfish are fish that sink."

This statement, in addition to being picturesque, is literally true in essentials, for the majority of the edible varieties of shellfish, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, spend most or all of their lives at or near the bottom of the waters they inhabit.

In other words, while "the fish that swim" get about a bit and see the sea, "fish that sink," while migratory to some extent, are in reality the "homebodies" of the fish world.

Shellfish contribute greatly to the country's food supply and probably no species is more generally favored as food than the oyster. In America, before the arrival of the colonists, the Indians consumed large quantities of this delicacy, as is attested by the huge mounds of oyster shells, often called "kitchen middens," found along the seaboard in some of our Eastern States.

Today the oyster enjoys universal acceptance, both as a staple item of food and as a delicacy. The sanitary conditions surrounding its cultivation, its handling at the point of origin, and its transportation and marketing,

are today controlled by Government agencies so that it is now possible for the consumer, in any section of the country, to obtain oysters in prime condition.

Undoubtedly one of the most popular uses for the oyster is in the cocktail. It's a kind of cocktail--one of the few--that goes to the tummy and not to the head, but, like the liquid cocktail, produces a feeling on the part of the consumer that "all's well with the world."

To prepare this cocktail, about 2 dozen thoroughly chilled oysters are required for 4 persons. For the sauce, take 6 tbsps. of tomato catsup, 2 tbsps. of horseradish, and 4 tbsps. of lemon juice, with celery salt and tabasco sauce to taste. The ingredients should be put into a jar or wide-mouth bottle and thoroughly shaken before being served--about 2 tbsps. of cocktail sauce for each serving of 1/2 dozen oysters is usually sufficient.

A good oyster stew is another of the kitchen's best productions. According to the Service's cookery experts, an oyster stew made with fresh healthy oysters and fresh, rich milk, has everything that is needed to provide a well-balanced highly nutritious meal--the necessary vitamins, proteins, mineral salts, fats, etc.--and, in addition, a delicious, appetizing flavor. Such an oyster stew makes a splendid midday dish for the children if they lunch at home, and an excellent dish for anyone, at any time.

Fishery Circular No. 21, "The Story of Oysters," contains 35 laboratory-tested oyster recipes, and is obtainable at 5¢ a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

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